



NEWS

From County Supervisor Paul Biane

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Chairman Biane Commends Bribery Investigation

SAN BERNARDINO – Board of Supervisors Chairman Paul Biane on Thursday commended Fifth District Supervisor Josie Gonzales and her staff for working closely with the District Attorney's Public Integrity Unit to secure felony bribery charges against two Pasadena businessmen.

Arshak Kouladjian, 53, and Vartan Kouladjian, 45, were arrested on Wednesday after a four-month investigation by the Public Integrity Unit. The men, who own an auto salvage business in Bloomington, are accused of bribing Fifth District Chief of Staff Bob Page.

"These men undoubtedly did not know who they were dealing with," Biane said. "As a former investigative newspaper reporter, Mr. Page helped uncover corruption that tarnished the County's image in the late 1990s, so he's keenly aware of his ethical responsibilities as a County employee and of the repercussions when the public's trust is violated."

The Kouladjians face up to three years in state prison if convicted of the bribery charges leveled against them. They were arrested and detained in West Valley Detention Center in Rancho Cucamonga with bail set at \$500,000 each.

"Bribery is a heinous crime that undermines the public's faith in government, and it will not be tolerated at any level in the County of San Bernardino," Biane said. "The Board of Supervisors is committed to ethical and honest leadership."

Biane noted that the Board of Supervisors and the County have taken a number of steps over the last few years to enhance public access to County Government, including broadcasting Board meetings live on the Internet and archiving videos of past

meetings. In addition, residents can access campaign finance disclosure documents and County officials' statements of economic interest on the Web. In the past, members of the public had to visit County offices and request these records.

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